

DETAILED KNOWN CHRONOLOGY ON
THE LOCATION AND SEIZURE OF THE PUEBLO 1/

1) Jan. 11, 6:00 AM Korean Time (102100Z, 1600 EST, Jan. 10)

Pueblo departed Sasebo under instructions to engage in an intelligence-gathering mission in the Sea of Japan and under orders that the closest point of approach to the North Korean land mass and offshore islands was to be 13 nautical miles. 2/

2) Jan. 12, 11:30 PM Korean Time (121430Z, 0930 EST, Jan. 12)

Pueblo arrived in her operations area.

3) Jan. 20, 5:50 PM Korean Time (200850Z, 0350 EST, Jan. 20)

Pueblo position reported as 39-47.0N/128-25.5E, 15.4 nautical miles from nearest land. 3/ Pueblo sighted a North Korean submarine chaser at 4,000 yards. It showed no interest in the Pueblo.

1/ Times given are in Korean Time, Greenwich Mean Time (Z), and Eastern Standard Time (EST). Greenwich Mean Time is 9 hours behind and Eastern Standard Time 14 hours behind Korean Time. In some cases this results in events being recorded on different days on Greenwich and/or Eastern Standard Time than in Korean Time. The Korean Time makes clear what the actual daylight or nighttime conditions were in the area. For additional clarity the Korean times are given in AM and PM instead of the 24-hour clock used for military messages.

2/ The Pueblo did not thereafter transmit any messages until 10:50 AM Korean Time on January 23 (230150Z, or 2050 EST, Jan. 22). Between that point and 12:52 PM Korean Time (230352Z, 2252 EST, Jan. 22) it transmitted all the data set forth through number 12 below on previous events, except for numbers 8 and 11 which are derived from the log of the receiving station on shore.

3/ This and subsequent distances from the nearest land were not given by the Pueblo itself but have been calculated by the Navy Department from the position coordinates reported by the Pueblo.

- 4) Morning of January 22 Korean Time (night of Jan. 21Z and late afternoon Jan. 21 EST)

Pueblo arrived in area off Wonsan.

- 5) Jan. 22, 12:25 PM Korean Time (220325Z, 2225 EST, Jan. 21)

Two North Korean vessels were sighted at 10,000 yards. When both had reached a point about 1,500 yards from the Pueblo, one changed course and closed to about 100 yards. The Pueblo identified them as probably North Korean fishing ships. They withdrew to about 9,000 yards.

- 6) Jan. 22, 3:00 PM Korean Time (220600Z, or 0100 EST, Jan. 22)

The two North Korean vessels made another approach to the Pueblo, closing this time to 30 yards. The Pueblo at this time was dead in the water, showing the signal for hydrographic operations, at 39-14.8N/128-07.0E (15 nautical miles from Nam Do). The two vessels finally departed at 4:00 PM Korean Time (220700Z, or 0200 EST, Jan. 22).

- 7) Jan. 22, 4:00 PM to Jan. 23, 10:00 AM Korean Time (220700Z, or 0200 EST Jan. 22 to 230100Z, or 2000 EST, Jan. 22)

Pueblo had 18 different contacts with unidentified vessels, the closest at 3,000 yards.

- 8) Jan. 22, 6:25 PM (220925Z, or 0425 EST, Jan. 22)

Pueblo broke radio silence for first time since leaving port, exchanged call signs with shore station, but sent no messages.

- 9) Jan. 23, 8:30 AM Korean Time (222330Z, or 1830 EST, Jan. 22)

Pueblo position reported as 39-12N/128-21.4E, 17 nautical miles from Nam Do.

- 10) Jan. 23, 10:00 AM Korean Time (230100Z, or 2000 EST, Jan. 22)

Pueblo position reported as 39-24N/127-59E, 18.2 nautical miles from Ung Do.

- 11) Jan. 23, 10:50 AM Korean Time (230150Z, or 2050 EST, Jan. 22)

The operator succeeded for the first time in establishing communications. He asked if his transmissions could be read,

gave Pueblo's position at 39-24N/127-59E (18.2 nautical miles from Ung Do), and reported he had some messages to send. 4/

- 12) Jan. 23, 10:50 AM Korean Time (230150Z, or 2050 EST, Jan. 22)

The Pueblo felt it was no longer under surveillance and reported its intention to remain in the area and go back into radio silence. 5/

- 13) Jan. 23, subsequent to 11:35 AM Korean Time (230235Z, or 2135 EST, Jan. 22)

The Pueblo operator, in operational "chatter" of uncertain time subsequent to the transmittal of the message in 12) above, reported the Pueblo had "more company" and intended to keep its circuit open.

(This was the first indication that the Pueblo was currently under surveillance.)

4/This call, with its position, was the first information received from the Pueblo subsequent to its departure from Sasebo on January 11. As indicated in footnote 2, the preceding information was transmitted between this time and 12:52 PM Korean Time (230352Z, or 2252 EST on Jan. 22)

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- 14) Jan. 23, 12:00 noon Korean Time (230300Z, or 2200 EST, Jan. 22)

North Korean Submarine Chaser 35 reported by Pueblo as arriving on the scene, i.e. at 39-25.2N/127-55.0E, where the Pueblo lay dead in the water, 16.2 nautical miles from Ung Do.

The Pueblo reported that the 35 had hoisted a signal requesting its nationality. The Pueblo reported it hoisted the U.S. ensign, then the signal for "hydrographer". The 35 hoisted the signal: "Heave to or I will open fire on you." The Pueblo signaled: "I am in international waters." The 35 continued to circle the Pueblo. 6/

- 15) Jan. 23, 12:10 PM Korean Time (230310Z, or 2210 EST, Jan. 22)

Intercepted message from the North Korean Submarine Chaser #35 first reported contact with and identification of the Pueblo, i.e. as the GER 2. In a separate message at exactly the same time it gave its position as 39-26N/127-58E or 18.6 nautical miles from Ung Do.

5/ This message was transmitted some time after 11:35 AM Korean Time (230235Z, or 2135 EST on Jan. 22)

6/ This message, sent with a "flash" precedence, and in a category indicating a serious situation, was transmitted between 12:52 PM Korean Time (230352Z, or 2252 EST, Jan. 22) and 1:13 PM Korean Time 230413Z, or 2313 EST, Jan. 22). Because of its emergency character and flash precedence this message was retransmitted and cleared communications channels faster than any of the preceding messages and was the first report to reach Washington. All the reports from the Pueblo which follow in this chronology were sent after this report, except the one in 14/; which was part of this message.

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- 16) Jan. 23, 12:52 PM Korean Time (230352Z, or 2252 EST, Jan. 22)
(probable time)

Pueblo reported its intention was to remain in the area if feasible; if not, to withdraw slowly to the Northeast.

During the subsequent few minutes the operator reported it was "worse out here" and that the Pueblo had "more company".

- 17) Jan. 23, 1:15 to 1:18 PM Korean Time (230415 to 230418Z,
or 2315 EST to 2318 EST, Jan. 22)

Pueblo reported that the 35 had been joined at 1:00 PM Korean Time (0400Z or 2300 EST, Jan. 22) by three P-4 (torpedo boat) patrol craft. One Korean vessel signaled: "Follow in my wake. I have a pilot aboard." Two MIG's were sighted circling. One patrol boat with tenders rigged was reported backing toward the Pueblo with an armed landing party on board. The party was attempting to board.

The Pueblo reported itself underway, all ahead one-third, right full rudder; departing the area under escort

- 18) Jan. 23, 1:26 PM Korean Time (230426Z, or 2326 EST, Jan. 22)
to 1:36 PM Korean Time (230436Z, or 2336 EST, Jan. 22)

At 1:26 PM the Pueblo gave its position as 39-25.5N/127-54.9E and said, "They plan to open fire on us now". At 1:28 PM the Pueblo operator repeated that they planned to open fire and said, "We are being boarded." Then gave a slightly different position (39-25N/127-54.3E). Within the next few minutes the operator reported: "We are holding emergency destruction" i.e.

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of classified equipment and documents. The operator reported "laying to" at about 1:36 PM Korean Time.

19) Jan. 23, between 1:40 and 1:50 PM Korean Time (230440Z to 230445Z, or 2340 to 2345 EST, Jan. 22)

Pueblo operator reported: "We are being escorted into probably Wonsan."

20) Jan. 23, 2:00 PM Korean Time (230500Z, or 2400 EST, Jan. 22)
at about this time

Pueblo operator/transmitted a fuller and somewhat more formal report than the previous "chatter" that the Pueblo had been requested to follow into Wonsan, that 3 men were wounded and another had his leg blown off, that they had not used any weapons nor uncovered the 50 caliber machine guns, and that they did not intend to offer resistance.

21) Jan. 23, 2:30 PM Korean Time (230530Z, or 0030 EST, Jan. 23)

The Pueblo operator reported that the ship had been directed to come to "all stop" and again reported "being boarded".

22) Jan. 23, 2:32 PM Korean Time (230532Z, or 0032 EST, Jan. 23)

Final transmission from the Pueblo repeated 4 men were injured, one critically, and said it was going off the air and destroying the radio. (Best available evidence indicates the boarding occurred shortly after this point.)

23) Jan. 23, 2:40 PM Korean Time (230540Z, or 0040 EST, Jan. 23)

The North Korean Submarine Chaser 35 reported its position at 39-24N/128-01E (19.6 nautical miles from Ung Do) and one of the torpedo boats reported its position at 39-26N/127-58E (18.6 nautical miles from Ung Do).

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24) Jan. 23, 3:35 PM Korean Time (230635Z, or 0135 EST, Jan. 23)

At this time came the first position report from a North Korean vessel on the way in from the seizure which placed it closer than 12 nautical miles from North Korean territory. This report, over an hour after seizure and more than 3 hours after the start of the incident, placed the North Korean ship at 39-21N/127-51E, or 11.2 nautical miles from Ung Do.

25) Jan. 23, about 5:00 PM Korean Time (230800Z, or 0300 EST, Jan. 23)

The Pueblo was taken into Wonsan Harbor.

26) Jan. 23, 5:36 PM Korean Time (230836Z or 0336 EST, Jan. 23)

Sunset in the Wonsan area.

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